

Message Text

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ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00

USIE-00 INRE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-11 L-03 NSC-07 PA-04

RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20 EUR-25 MC-02 ACDA-19 DRC-01

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FM AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2229

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOGADISCIO 1381

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR ET SO US

SUBJ: GSDR PROTEST RE US STATEMENTS ON SOMALI BASES AND ETHIOPIA

REF: A. MOGADISCIO 1373; B. MOGADISCIO 1375 C. MOGADISCIO 1376

1. TEXT OF SOMALI PROTEST NOTE AND GSDR HANDLING OF IT TO DATE SUGGEST TO US THAT GSDR DOES NOT RPT NOT WISH ENGAGE IN MAJOR CONTROVERSY WITH USG OVER CONTRADICTION BETWEEN PRESIDENT SIAD'S AND PRESIDENT FORD'S PUBLIC STATEMENTS ABOUT SOVIET BASES IN SOMALIA OR OVER US ARMS ASSISTANCE TO ETHIOPIA. THUS NOTE AVOIDS DIRECT CRITICISM OF PRESIDENT FORD AND DOES NOT RPT NOT TAKE ISSUE WITH FACT OF US ARMS ASSISTANCE TO ETHIOPIA - MERELY WITH DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN'S JUSTIFICATION OF THIS ASSISTANCE. WE DO NOT RPT NOT SEE THAT US WOULD LESN FROM A CONFRONTATION EITHER AND BELIEVE THAT OUR REACTION TO GSDR PROTEST NOTE SHOULD BE TAILORED ACCORDINGLY.

2. WE WOULD RECOMMEND AGAINST WRITTEN REPLY TO SOMALI NOTE. WE SEE LITTLE REAL PURPOSE SERVED BY OUR GETTING INTO DISPUTE WITH GSDR OVER DEFINITION OF THE TERM "BASE". YET A US REPLY WHICH IGNORED BASE ISSUE WOULD APPEAR TO ACCEPT GSDR ASSERTIONS ON THIS POINT. WE THEREFORE FEEL REFUTATION OF FALSE STATE-
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MENTS IN NOTE - ABOUT DIEGO GARCIA AND US ATTITUDE ON SOMALI-

ETHIOPIAN DISPUTE AND TOWARD SOMALIA ITSELF - COULD BEST BE DONE ORALLY IN COURSE OF REGULAR DISCUSSIONS WITH SOMALI REPRESENTATIVES IN WASHINGTON AND HERE.

3. IF GSDR DOES MOUNT MAJOR PROPAGANDA CAMPAIGN OR TAKE OTHER ACTIONS AGAINST US INTERESTS WE COULD RECONSIDER THIS COURSE.

4. FOLLOWING PARAGRAPHS GIVE SOME OF THINKING WHICH LEADS US TO THIS RECOMMENDATION.

5. PRESIDENT SIAD HAS IN RECENT MONTHS MADE FREQUENT PUBLIC STATEMENTS DENYING THAT SOVIETS HAVE A "BASE" IN SOMALIA. IF GSDR REALLY ACCEPTS DEFINITION OF "BASE" AS DESCRIBED TO ME BY ACTING FONSEC (REF C) - AN AREA OVER WHICH HOST COUNTRY HAS NO CONTROL AND TO WHICH OCCUPYING POWER HAS FREE ACCESS - IT MAY BE THAT SIAD IS TELLING THE TRUTH. WE HAVE REPORTS THAT SOVIET DESIRE FOR SUCH PRIVILEGES HAS BEEN MATTER OF DISPUTE BETWEEN GSDR AND SOVIETS. IF SO, SOMALIS WOULD BE PARTICULARLY SENSITIVE ON THIS POINT. THE FACTS OF THE MATTER ASIDE, IT WOULD HAVE BEEN DIFFICULT FOR GSDR TO IGNORE PUBLIC CONTRADICTION BETWEEN SIAD'S REPORTED DECLARATIONS AND PUBLIC COMMENTS OF PRESIDENT FORD, ESPECIALLY WHEN OTHER NATIONS CONCERNED HAVE SPOKEN UP. THEIR DEALING WITH THIS ISSUE BY STATING PRESIDENT FORD "MIS-INFORMED" BY OTHERS IS PERHAPS MINIMUM THAT COULD HAVE BEEN EXPECTED.

6. SOMALI NOTE'S COMMENTS ON DIEGO GARCIA, WHILE UNPLEASANT, ARE NOT RPT NOT MUCH WORSE THAN THOSE MADE PREVIOUSLY BY SOME OTHER INDIAN OCEAN LITTORAL STATES AND WERE SOMEWHAT TONED IN GSDR PUBLIC STATEMENT (REF A).

7. AS POINTED OUT ABOVE, NOTE CRITICIZES DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN'S JUSTIFICATION OF OUR ARMS ASSISTANCE TO ETHIOPIA RATHER THAN THIS ASSISTANCE ITSELF, AND ACTING FONSEC TOLD AMBASSADOR THAT GSDR ACCEPTED FACT OF LONG-STANDING US-ETHIOPIAN RELATIONSHIP. GSDR PRESS STATEMENT DID INCLUDE CRITICISM OF US ARMS SHIPMENTS TO ETHIOPIA, BUT THIS PERHAPS INEVITABLE IN A PUBLIC DOCUMENT. COMMENT: IT DOES SEEM TO ME THAT DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN'S AUGUST 26 STATEMENTS WENT A LITTLE BEYOND USG'S PREVIOUS GENERAL RE-CONFIDENTIAL

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FERENCES TO "DISPUTE" BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES AND THAT THE MORE GENERAL PHRASEOLOGY WAS PREFERABLE. END COMMENT.

8. GSDR NOTE'S SHRILL STATEMENTS ABOUT US "HOSTILE" ATTITUDE AND "ILL-WILL" CAN HOPEFULLY BE TREATED AS GENERALIZED HYPERBOLE. ACTING FONSEC WAS QUITE CORDIAL IN PRELIMINARIES OF HIS MEETING WITH AMBASSADOR AND DEALT WITH SEVERAL OTHER QUESTIONS AFTER DISCUSSION OF NOTE CONCLUDED.

10. GSDR HAS NOT RPT NOT AS YET PUBLISHED TEXT OF NOTE OR IN-
DEED FACT THAT PROTEST MADE TO USG. FACT THAT INFORMATION
MINISTRY'S SEPTEMBER 6 RELEASE CONTAINED SUBSTANCE OF GSDR
POSITION SUGGESTS TO US THAT TEXT OF NOTE MAY NOT RPT NOT BE
RELEASED. THERE HAVE NOT RPT NOT TO DATE BEEN ANY OTHER SIGNS
OF ANTI-US PROPAGANDA CAMPAIGN DEVELOPING.

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